



# Town Meeting



*Bulletin* OF AMERICA'S  
TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR  
*Sponsored by* THE READER'S DIGEST

## On What Basis Can Russia and the Western Powers Reach a Peace Settlement?

*Moderator,* GEORGE V. DENNY, JR.

### *Speakers*

H. V. KALTENBORN  
WALTER DURANTY

ERNEST LINDLEY  
QUINCY HOWE

*(See also page 12)*

COMING NOVEMBER 1st

## Are Local Party Organizations An Asset To Democracy?

(PREVIEW IN THIS ISSUE—See Page 22)

TUNE IN EVERY THURSDAY, AMERICAN BROADCASTING COMPANY—8:30 p.m., E.S.T.



# ★ ★ ★ CONTENTS ★ ★ ★

The account of the meeting reported in this Bulletin was transcribed from recordings made of the actual broadcast and represents the exact content of the meeting as nearly as such mechanism permits. The publishers and printer are not responsible for the statements of the speakers or the points of view presented.

## THE BROADCAST OF OCTOBER 18:

### "On What Basis Can Russia and the Western Powers Reach a Peace Settlement?"

Mr. DENNY .....	3
Mr. KALTENBORN .....	4
Mr. DURANTY .....	5
Mr. LINDLEY .....	7
Mr. HOWE .....	9
THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN .....	12
QUESTIONS, PLEASE! .....	15



## THE BROADCAST OF OCTOBER 25:

### "Should We Share the Secret of the Atomic Bomb With Any Other Nation?"

(SEE PREVIEW IN BULLETIN OF OCTOBER 11)



## THE BROADCAST OF NOVEMBER 1:

### "Are Local Party Organizations An Asset To Democracy?"

TOWN MEETING PREVIEW .....	22
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# Town Meeting

Bulletin of America's Town Meeting of the Air



George V. Denny, Jr., Moderator

## On What Basis Can Russia and the Western Powers Reach a Peace Settlement?

### Announcer:

*The Reader's Digest*, America's most widely read magazine, welcomes you to another stirring session of America's Town Meeting, the program that gives you both sides of issues affecting your life and mine. Tonight here at Town Hall in New York, four authorities clash over the most pressing international question of the day—one that may mean war or peace for our children and our children's children.

Now to open this important session, *The Reader's Digest* brings you the president of Town Hall, founder and moderator of America's Town Meeting, Mr. George V. Denny, Jr. Mr. Denny. (*Applause.*)

### Moderator Denny:

Good evening, neighbors. Let's imagine we're sitting at that round table in London where the foreign ministers of Britain, Russia, the United States, France and China met September 1. Their immedi-

ate task, according to the Potsdam Declaration, was to draw up drafts of treaties of peace with Italy, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Finland, and to propose settlements on territorial questions outstanding on the termination of the war in Europe.

They couldn't even agree on the rules of the game, and there was no umpire to make the decisions for them. So they just didn't play ball.

As we sit here around this table tonight with H. V. Kaltenborn, Walter Duranty, Ernest Lindley, and Quincy Howe, we are going to see if we can't lay out some ground rules that might be helpful to those representatives when they meet here again.

We're going to try to explain, first of all, why the Council of Foreign Ministers failed, and then see if we can suggest a basis on which they should be able to proceed with their work.

In true Town Meeting fashion you, the members of the audience



here in Town Hall, New York, will have an opportunity to make your suggestions in terms of comments, as well as questions.

Now let's get under way with an analysis of the situation by the dean of American radio commentators, Mr. H. V. Kaltenborn. *(Applause.)*

**Mr. Kaltenborn:**

We ask, "On what basis can Russia and the western powers reach a peace settlement?" We answer, "On a basis of mutual interest."

What does Russia want? Security against a repetition of attacks by western powers.

What do the western powers want? Security against revived Russian imperialism and militant Soviet Communism. Russia and the western powers all want security. How can they get it?

Two rival power blocs in Europe, one under Russia and the other under Britain, are now developing. The daily headlines tell the story. The struggle is under way. Rival power politics has already replaced the short-lived war alliance.

Is there no other way? Of course there is. The only true path to peace was blazed by the League of Nations. It is being carried forward by the United Nations. If that plan works, we will have peace. If it fails, we will have war. The big powers have agreed to try it. But they do not rely on it.

We seek advantage out of the atomic bomb. Russia seeks advantage out of her dominant mili-

tary and political might in Europe. We live in a world in which we voice ideals but rely on power.

I should like to discuss two points: Russia's fear of the atomic bomb and our fear of communist autocracy. Russia will never trust us while we alone possess a decisive war weapon. We will not trust Russia while she insists on a news black-out and a totalitarian Europe.

Our policy on the atomic bomb is one decisive factor in a peace settlement with Russia. Therefore, I favor a United Nations commission, representing the eleven council powers, to agree upon the use of the atomic bomb. But I impose this condition: the United Nations must be able to set up complete control machinery everywhere. There must be a United Nations checkup on all laboratories and on all industry all over the world.

I am willing to have my country forego the use of the atomic bomb, provided every other country, including Russia, is compelled to make the same sacrifice.

We have talked much nonsense about atomic bomb secrecy. It isn't a secret. It's the possession of certain raw materials, plus scientific and industrial know-how.

This country cannot afford to promote fear and hate all over the world by an atomic threat. Yet, we should never give up the right to employ against others what others may employ against us.

But just as Russia considers the atomic bomb a threat to her peace, we consider the spread of com-

munist autocracy a threat to our peace. Russia has insisted on setting up totalitarian governments in liberated Europe. Communist autocracies now dominate Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania.

Thanks to Russian support, Communists are powerful in Finland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Austria. In most of these countries, there is no true basis for the free elections which Stalin promised.

Every day since Russia deadlocked the London conference, the headlines report new problems. Here are a few of this week's: "Subasitch Rejects Tito's Autocratic Rule in Yugoslavia," "Byrnes Needs Special Envoy to Report on Balkans," "Russia Demands MacArthur be Superseded," "Eisenhower Criticizes Red Rule in Berlin," "Russians Expel Americans from Manchuria," and today, "Russia Rejects Far-East Advisory Commission." I hope Walter Duranty and Quincy Howe will explain how all that adds up to cooperation.

The first thing we have a right to ask from Russia is free access to facts. Wherever Russia rules there is a black-out. We should at once place all information exchanged with Russia on a mutual basis. So far, we have conceded too much and received too little. (*Applause.*) One final thought, we should not keep on talking solemnly about our duty of getting along with Russia. Good relations with Russia will begin on the day Russia decides she wants to get along with us. (*Applause.*)

### Moderator Denny:

Thank you, Mr. Kaltenborn, but I think I detect a note of disagreement on the part of Walter Duranty, who for twenty years was with the *New York Times*, as their representative in Russia. Mr. Duranty is the author of a new book on Russian history, *The U.S.S.R.* I take pleasure in presenting Walter Duranty. (*Applause.*)

### Mr. Duranty:

I agree with Mr. Kaltenborn about the atomic bomb. But I certainly do not agree with him about the black-out of news in Russia, and still more, in fact I vehemently disagree with his suggestions that we should be guided by newspaper headlines in our estimate of Russia. (*Applause.*)

I've suffered more from censorship than most people. I've worked under censorship for 30 years in the foreign field, and I don't like censorships. On the other hand, I don't believe that a multitude of witnesses, whether they are reporters or diplomats, invariably bring wisdom.

Now, for instance, take today the editorial in the *New York Times* about the coverage of news from Argentina. Do we know what's going on despite that coverage of news? Can any of you tell me in this country, which is free and where you have free right of speech and press, just what is American policy? I'd like to know.



Would you really know much more if Russia was flooded with reporters and with diplomats?

I think that this outcry of press freedom in Russia is one of the perpetual attacks on Russia. Before that we heard about the Red trade menace, or the communist peril, or something like that. There is too much of these recriminations. They are useless and they tend to injure friendly relations, rather than to improve them. It's more important to note that the Russians are still uneasy about the formation of a western bloc against them. They also suspect the part that's being played by big business in the remodeling of the world. And third, the questions of oil and heavy industry and finance have a lot to do with the London deadlock.

Apart from that, Russia has two main lines of action: first, to destroy and keep destroyed German capacity to make war ever again (*applause*); second, to establish, where possible, regimes friendly to Russia and neighboring countries.

Now this brings me to a point which has aroused so much criticism, and that Mr. Kaltenborn mentioned, that the Russians are putting as much power as possible in the hands of Communists in the countries they control. What else could you expect when these countries from Rumania to France are still infested by former Nazi collaborators?

General Eisenhower would tell you that it's one of his greatest difficulties in the German occupation — that very point — and De

Gaulle might say the same thing of France. The Russians feel they can at least trust the Communists to wipe out every trace of Nazi influence, but this does not mean, much less prove, that the Russians are trying to make these countries communist or induce them to join the Soviet Union.

You cannot make a communist revolution, as the Russians well know. It occurs as a result of certain well-defined conditions which may well indeed be present in some parts of Europe as they were in Russia in 1917. It is not made by intrigue, or propaganda, or money, or even by the use of force.

Besides, there's no sign the Russians are trying to do anything of the kind. Take the case of China. Only a few weeks ago most Americans believed the Russians were trying to grab all of northern China and Manchuria and Korea by provoking civil war between the Chinese Communists and the government of Chiang Kai-shek. Instead, they're doing their best to pacify China and get the two opposing Chinese groups together.

The Chinese foreign minister said yesterday that the Red Army troops are already withdrawing from Manchuria. That doesn't look like Bolshevization, does it? Or even Red Imperialism?

In this case, hostile criticism is refuted by facts, but it seems to me that instead of criticizing the Russians or even criticizing ourselves, the first thing is to see what the Russians want and see if we

can get together. That is the point of this debate.

The Russians make no secret of their belief that the three nations which really won the war—the United States, Russia, and Britain—should draw the main outlines of peace, and allow the rest of the United Nations to fill in details and make suggestions.

This naturally means they want full and equal voice in all international affairs, whether it's a question of Tangier or the mandated colonies of Italy or the future regime of Japan.

It's right and well to talk about the new League of Nations, but that is a long-range scheme which does not operate yet. We cannot wait for that, nor for stalemates like that of London, which reminds me all too sharply of the squabbles and shameful compromises of the Paris Peace Conference in 1919.

My immediate solution is another meeting of the Big Three as soon as possible. Let the three chief executives talk freely together, without interference of the press or public, and then announce their decisions as a practical measure, which in present circumstances is the only practical measure.

They did so in making war; they must do so in making peace and do it now. I'm convinced the danger is not war between Russia and America any more than between 1919 and 1939 there was danger of war between France and England. The danger today, as then, is that our former enemies may take advantage of disagree-

ments and rivalries which are already evident and which they and their secret supporters are trying to intensify in order to make a comeback, just as Germany made one before. (*Applause.*)

#### **Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Walter Duranty, Now, here's another news analyst who is at home in the White House, on Capitol Hill, and in all government buildings in Washington, where he's recognized as one of the ablest reporters in that city. He's head of the Washington Bureau of the magazine *Newsweek*. Mr. Ernest K. Lindley. Mr. Lindley. (*Applause.*)

#### **Mr. Lindley:**

Mr. Duranty has given us a sweetly reasonable exposition of Russia's fears and purposes. Let us concede that the Russians want security, that they are entitled to it. To an outsider, it would seem also that Russia urgently needs opportunity for internal reconstruction and to raise the standard of living of the Russian people.

None of these aims requires the expansion of Russia either directly by military force or indirectly through communist puppet states outside the Soviet Union. Mr. Duranty has cited the recent Russian pact with China as evidence that Russia is not trying to Bolshevize anyone. I agree that the pact was very encouraging and if its spirit is lived up to it will go a long way toward stabilizing East Asia.



But in Eastern Europe and the areas under communist-Russian domination, a whole series of communist-controlled governments have been set up. According to the best information we have, these communist-controlled governments have been very energetic about terrorizing and liquidating all effective political opposition, not merely the former Nazi or Fascist sympathizers to which Mr. Duranty referred, but the leaders of democratic groups, by our tests, who were not willing to accept communist dictation.

Now it's reasonable for the Russians to want friendly states along the eastern border. The western Allies have recognized that. But judging from the practice in Eastern Europe, the Russian idea of a friendly state is one under communist control. If that definition were to be given world-wide application, the outlook would be very dark indeed.

The present situation in much of Eastern Europe conflicts with our principles and ultimately with our interests. It is incompatible in spirit and letter with the declaration of liberated Europe to which Stalin subscribed at Yalta. That declaration provided, in substance, for joint handling of the problems of liberated Europe by Russia, Britain, and the United States.

It expressed the hope that the French government might be associated with them in that enterprise.

It said in substance that the provisional governments of liberated and former Axis satellite states

should be broadly representative of all democratic elements, and that they should be pledged to the earliest possible establishment of freely elected governments.

The issues involved are fundamental and not the least of them is the question of good faith. The western Allies are entirely right in insisting that the principles outlined at Yalta should be adhered to.

No nation which has an alternative is going to rely entirely on security through international action. But there are points at which international security and homemade security cannot be reconciled; a choice must be made.

Russia faces such a choice in Eastern Europe. Russian insistence upon a tight eastern bloc will almost unavoidably create, as Mr. Duranty says, what she fears—a western bloc. The line between homemade security and creeping aggression is not always clear and a creeping aggression can develop very easily into a larger aggression.

Even if we were absolutely sure of the aims of Soviet policy today, and I doubt that we are, we can't be sure what they will be ten, five, or even two years hence. Russian policy is not fully controlled by the Russian people. Russia is not a political democracy in our meaning of the phrase, and what the Russian people hear about the rest of the world is what their government lets them hear.

Now Stalin is nearly 66 years old. By the American method of computing the time that he's been



the head, the real head, of the Soviet state, he is now in the middle of his fifth term, if not his sixth. The man of steel, like the rest of us, is mortal, but as matters stand we have no way of knowing who his successor will be, by what means and with what backing he will obtain control of the Russian state, what ambitions may govern him, or on what adventures he may embark.

Indeed, some close observers think that they've already detected signs of developing struggle for power within the Russian hierarchy at the very top. It is, therefore, doubly important that the western democracies do everything in their power to draw Russia far along the path of international security.

We should proceed as rapidly as possible with the creation of the United Nations Organization and its various subdivisions, including the military staff committee. The atomic bomb makes it imperative that the whole question of international regulation and supervision of armaments be taken up courageously in the very near future.

The general principles to which the major powers have publicly subscribed are sound. We should make it plain that we believe in them and intend to adhere to them, that we expect the Russians to do likewise. We should make it entirely clear to the Russians that they cannot have their cake and eat it too. (*Applause.*)

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Ernest Lindley. Well, Quincy Howe, you've shared this platform with Mr. Kaltenborn

before but the last time you were on the same side. Now, we hear from another highly distinguished radio commentator, Mr. Quincy Howe. Mr. Howe. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Howe:**

I'm a little surprised to hear Mr. Kaltenborn and Mr. Lindley making so much of developments that have followed the Yalta Agreements. Eight months ago on this Town Hall platform, Mr. Kaltenborn backed me up when I argued that the Yalta Agreements confirmed Russia's dominant position in Eastern Europe, and when I further warned that the American people were being oversold on the promises and achievements of Yalta. (*Applause.*)

Sure enough, it has now become a more and more open secret that when Churchill conferred with Stalin in Moscow, during the summer of 1944, they agreed to divide the Balkans into Russian and British spheres of influence with the Russians largely predominating.

This agreement which is surely no secret to so well-informed a correspondent as Mr. Lindley does seem to me to cut some of the ground on which he and Mr. Kaltenborn stands out from under them.

But none of us have come here just to score debaters points or quibble over matters of procedure and phrasing. What all of us here tonight hope is that through our differences of emphasis and opinion we can help those who hear us to find out for themselves some answer to the question of the

evening, "On What Basis Can Russia and the Western Powers Reach a Peace Settlement?"

Well, here's one more approach to the subject. Understanding between the United States and the Soviet Union must precede and underlie any agreement between the other Western powers and the Russians.

Whether the world organizes itself on a Big Three basis or on a United Nations basis, neither type of organization can work without American and Russian support. If America and Russia get together, no other bloc of powers can develop strong enough to threaten the peace. (*Applause.*)

The American people and their leaders can make two contributions to Russian-American understanding: first, we must define our vital interests as clearly as the Russians have defined theirs; second, we must understand Russia's vital interests as clearly as we want them to understand ours. This could be done in one of two ways, either through a conference of a few top Russian and American leaders, maybe even another Big Three conference as Mr. Duranty has suggested. Or else at least through a more precise statement of American foreign policies than we've yet heard.

If it then appears that American and Russian vital interests do not conflict anywhere, the two countries can compose, in an atmosphere of mutual confidence, any other minor differences that may come up. Unhappily, that atmos-

phere of mutual confidence does not now entirely prevail, as some of the remarks made this evening only too clearly show.

A lot of this misunderstanding, on our side at any rate, arises from the fact that we do not yet seem to know just where our vital interests lie, which leads us, in turn, to the most dangerous luxury in which a great nation can indulge—the luxury of announcing moral purposes that we will not or cannot fulfill.

Mr. Duranty's statement of the Russian position outlines a very wide area of potential Russian-American agreement. Surely, for instance, the United States has as much interest as Russia in keeping both Germany and Japan permanently weak. Surely both America and Russia do not want to see either Europe or Asia divided into two hostile blocks of power. Neither the Americans nor the Russians have colonial empires to restore or to subdue, and nowhere do our security zones overlap.

Those, then, are the facts, as I see them. I say "as I see them" because facts and the truth do not always determine the behavior of men or nations. It is the way we interpret the facts. It is what we believe to be the truth that counts, as you see right here in this platform in front of you tonight. Russian moves that appear aggressive to us appear defensive to them. American moves that seem defensive to us appear aggressive to the Russians.



Friendship, Mr. Lindley has said, is not a one-way street. But the true friend is also the understanding friend and the understanding friend makes allowances for the other fellow's point of view, especially when one of the friends is sitting on top of the world with the atomic bomb in his lap and the other friend has just had half his property destroyed by fire and sword. (*Applause.*)

That is why I believe the good American who trusts his own country's strength and purpose will meet the Russians at least halfway. Indeed, our strength places upon us the responsibility of making that act of faith—faith in Russia, faith in ourselves, and faith in peace. (*Applause.*)

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Quincy Howe and each one of you gentlemen for splendid expositions of this important question, but if we're going to do a better job than the foreign ministers in finding a basis for our agreement on a peace settlement, we'd better have a little constructive conversation among ourselves before we invite the audience to participate in this discussion. Mr. Kaltenborn, would you start the conversation?

**Mr. Kaltenborn:** Well, I should like to ask Walter Duranty whether he doesn't think that in the deal that Russia made with China she certainly, while we all applaud it and like it, we must admit that Russia did get something for herself. She got the separation of Outer Mongolia from

China and she's dominating Outer Mongolia. She got control of the railroads and the ports of Manchuria and she's taken now a good part of the machinery in Manchuria. So she did not forego fomenting Communism in China without certainly getting something substantial in return. Isn't that true?

**Mr. Duranty:** No. No, it isn't true. Mr. Kaltenborn, as before, exaggerates. (*Laughter and applause.*) To begin with Russian occupation of and alliance with Outer Mongolia is a *fait accompli* of twenty years' existence. Secondly, in regard to Manchuria and the ports and railroads, they were built by Russia and they are not being taken by Russia, they're being shared by China on condition that they be restored to China later. All Russia is doing is getting something back of the properties which was robbed from Russia by the Japanese. As for foregoing the advantages of communist support, why a great many of my friends said to me, "What has happened to your Russians? They've thrown the Communists overboard." Far from not merely wishing to support them, they have deliberately supported the central government and, not only there but in Sinkiang and other parts where Russian influence was apparently predominant, they have sacrificed, I say, a great deal, for certain economics. As for taking over the equipment and so forth in China, in Manchuria, particularly, that again is one of these hearsay newspaper

## THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

**HANS V. KALTENBORN**—Dean of radio commentators, H. V. Kaltenborn made his first news broadcast in 1922. Born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Mr. Kaltenborn was graduated from Harvard in 1909 with an A.B. cum laude. Since then, he has received several honorary degrees. For twenty years, 1910-1930, he was associated with the *Brooklyn Eagle*. In 1930, he left the *Eagle* for WABC, key station for the Columbia network. Since 1940, he has been with the National Broadcasting Company. Mr. Kaltenborn has been radio reporter for many political conventions, League of Nations sessions, Pan American Peace Conferences, and the like. His honors and citations for meritorious radio reporting are too numerous to mention. He was awarded a gold plaque for the best foreign radio reporting covering the Spanish front in 1936, when he took the microphone on the field and made possible the first radio transmission of artillery and machine-gun fire during actual combat. Mr. Kaltenborn is the author of several books and many magazine articles. Among his books are *We Look at the World*, *Kaltenborn Edits the News* and *I Broadcast the Crisis*. Mr. Kaltenborn is widely traveled and has a knowledge of several foreign languages including French, German, and Italian.

**QUINCY HOWE**—Mr. Howe, a radio news commentator since 1939, has been with the Columbia Broadcasting System since 1942. Born in Boston in 1900, he received his A.B. degree from Harvard in 1921. The following year he was a student at Christ's College, in Cambridge, England. From 1922 to 1928, he was with the Atlantic Monthly Company; from 1929 to 1935, he was editor of *Living Age*; and since 1935, he has been associated with Simon and Schuster, Inc.

In 1939, Mr. Howe became a news commentator on station WQRX in New York, and in 1942 joined CBS. Mr. Howe is the author of *World Diary* (1929-34), *England Expects Every Man To Do His Duty* (1937), *Blood Is Cheaper Than Water* (1939), and *The News and How To Understand It* (1940).

**WALTER DURANTY**—Writer, foreign correspondent, and lecturer, Walter Duranty was born in Liverpool, England, in 1885. He was graduated with classical honors from Cambridge in 1906. From 1913 to 1939, Mr. Duranty was a foreign correspondent for the *New York Times*. During this period he was with the French Armies in 1917-18. He was a resident of Russia and was head of the Moscow bureau of the *Times*, from 1921 to 1934. From 1934 to 1939 he was a roving correspondent in Russia. From 1939 to 1941 he was a correspondent in Europe, Russia, and Japan.

Mr. Duranty's books include *I Write As I Please*, *One Life*, *One Kopeck*, *The Kremlin and the People*, *Search for a Key*, *USSR*, and *Return to the Vineyard* (with Mary Loos). In 1929 he was awarded the O'Henry short story prize and in 1932 he won a Pulitzer Prize.

**ERNEST KIDDER LINDLEY**—Born in Bloomington, Indiana, in 1899, Mr. Lindley attended the University of Indiana for a year and received an A.B. degree from the University of Idaho in 1920. He also has a B.A. degree from Oxford University, England, where he was a Rhodes scholar. In 1924 he became a reporter on the *Wichita Beacon*, but later the same year he joined the staff of the *New York World* as a reporter. He later was made political writer and Albany correspondent. In 1931 he became a political writer for the *New York Herald Tribune*, serving the Washington Bureau from 1934 until 1937.

Since 1937, Mr. Lindley has been chief of the Washington Bureau of *Newsweek*. Since 1938 he has also written a syndicated column. He has been a broadcaster for the Blue Network, the National Broadcasting Company, and the British Broadcasting Company.

Mr. Lindley is the author of several books including *Franklin D. Roosevelt—A Career in Progressive Democracy*; *The Roosevelt Revolution—First Phase*; *Half Way With Roosevelt*; *A New Deal for Youth* (with Betty G. Lindley); and *How War Came* (with Forrest Davis).

stories which are not necessarily credible. I am sorry to say I've worked for newspapers too long to believe in everything they say. (*Applause and shouts.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Mr. Kaltenborn.

**Mr. Kaltenborn:** I only hope

that because Walter has worked for newspapers so long that he doesn't believe everything they say, he hasn't reached the point where he believes nothing they say (*applause*), because all those headlines that I cited—for example, General



Eisenhower's report which many of you have read, of course it was pointed up in headlines—is a substantial fact and not merely a headline. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Thank you. Mr. Lindley has a question here.

**Mr. Lindley:** Mr. Howe made a point of the Churchill-Stalin agreements in 1943 and 1944 as justification for the present policy or present Russian practices in the Balkans and in Eastern Europe generally. Those agreements, as we understood them, were made as part of the whole military program and they conform more or less to the primary areas of military responsibility assumed by the various powers in connection with the march forward of their armies.

Certainly they were never sanctioned by the United States as having any long-term validity, and one of the primary purposes of President Roosevelt when he went to Yalta was to bring those together and to obtain an agreement on a joint policy. At least that is my understanding of the thing. The Yalta declaration indicated that Mr. Roosevelt had some success in that direction as long as he had Mr. Stalin at the table with him, but after they broke up the Russian practice seemed to depart from the Russian declaration of policy.

Mr. Howe, how would you explain the Russians apparently going back on what Stalin had promised at Yalta?

**Mr. Howe:** I never said that Stalin—and don't know that anyone else did—promised anything

more at Yalta than has been delivered. We don't know what Stalin and Churchill pledged to one another at Moscow first. We were told by Mr. Roosevelt that the details of the Yalta Agreement would gradually unfold themselves.

I think that the misunderstanding or differences of opinion are largely due to our ignorance, and our ignorance in turn leads us to assume these moral postures in Eastern Europe in respect to Russian rule there, for which I hold no particular brief, but it leads us to hold postures toward Russian rule in Eastern Europe which we are not qualified to fulfill. I think that as far as that rule is concerned, it compares at least fairly favorably with the rule that existed in those countries before.

**Mr. Denny:** Thank you, Mr. Howe. Mr. Kaltenborn.

**Mr. Kaltenborn:** I think that Walter Duranty will agree that the Moscow Conferences between Churchill and Stalin concerned, as Ernest Lindley says, the military entry into the countries, they certainly did not concern making the peace and at Yalta, Stalin definitely promised the setting up of democratic governments with free elections.

Now, we know that in none of those countries has that developed and there has been trouble ever since on account of it. We couldn't even get together on Poland for months after he had definitely promised that the Polish government would be revised. And what have they got now? They've got

a Communist-dominated government in a country that is primarily Catholic.

**Mr. Denny:** Mr. Duranty?

**Mr. Duranty:** I do not think that the Russians can fail, as I said before, to work with the Communists in these countries, not because they want them to join the Soviet Union but because they are the people they trust. I don't think that the Polish Government-in-Exile did prove itself trustworthy. I think that's one of the troubles. It is one of the main difficulties.

After all, the Russians liberated these countries and in no small degree are responsible for them. They are not trying to take them over any more than they are trying to take over China. It's all one pattern. But what they are trying to do is to establish there countries that are not either governed by obsolete landlords, or by crooked politicians. (*Words indistinguishable.*) And last, but not least, of course, is the unfortunate fact which no one could deny that the Russian interpretation of democracy, the American interpretation, and everyone else's interpretation of democracy are all entirely different. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Thank you. Mr. Howe?

**Mr. Howe:** I'd just like to repeat what I said here eight months ago—that the Yalta Agreement in promising to set up democratic procedures in the Balkan countries

doesn't make any sense at all because you cannot set up democratic procedures in those countries either by Russian standards, American standards, or any other standards.

**Mr. Denny:** You are good for remembering eight months back, Mr. Howe. Mr. Kaltenborn?

**Mr. Kaltenborn:** All right, I'll remember eight months back. What I said on that occasion was that I wish that Stalin had written the Yalta Agreement and that Roosevelt had signed it instead of the other way around.

**Mr. Denny:** Thank you, Mr. Kaltenborn. Now, there are so many questions out here in the audience. This is the time we are going to pause briefly for station identification.

**Announcer:** You are listening to America's Town Meeting, the program that gives both sides of questions vitally important to you, sponsored by the most widely read of all magazines, *The Reader's Digest*. Tonight, H. V. Kaltenborn, Ernest K. Lindley, Quincy Howe, and Walter Duranty are discussing the topic, "On What Basis Can Russia and the Western Powers Reach a Peace Settlement?"

For a complete copy of this discussion, including the question period immediately following, send for the Town Meeting Bulletin. Write to Town Hall, New York 18, New York. Enclose 10 cents to cover the cost of printing and mailing.



# QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. Now, we are ready for the questions here in Town Hall, New York. We start with this gentleman on the aisle.

*Man:* I have heard tonight the discussion about Russians and Communists in the same breath and a guest of ours stated with authority, "In the Kremlin were the Communists and outside the Kremlin were the Russians. Is it true that Communism is in the Kremlin and not in Russia?"

*Mr. Denny:* That's a question for you, Mr. Duranty.

*Mr. Duranty:* I would say it is not true—that the Communist Party of Russia dominates Russia completely. Lenin's policy and idea was that the Russian people would for many, many years, perhaps for three generations, be incapable of self-government owing to its past. And that for a long time it would be necessary for the Communist Party of Russia to act, as you might say, as a kind of tutor or guardian for this infant child. On the other hand, what I do say also, is that the policy—the extremist, so-called communist policies—with which the Russian revolution began have given place to a much more moderate form of socialism, of pact with the church, of revision of the marriage and divorce laws and last, but not least, of what is capitalist methods except for the basic principle of socialism, that is to say corporate or state ownership.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Duranty. The gentleman over here on the aisle.

*Man:* My question is for Mr. Kaltenborn. You stated in your major speech that Russia controlled the voting power in all of the minor countries—Bulgaria, Rumania, and all the other countries in that area.

*Mr. Kaltenborn:* The Communists controlled it.

*Man:* Yes, the Communists do. The point is this. Don't you feel that we, the British and the Americans, should make some concessions on our part, such as allowing the Greek people to make their own selections as to government and the Italians to make a selection of their own?

*Mr. Kaltenborn:* I certainly do and we are doing just that. Less in Greece than in Italy; in Italy they've already had a preliminary parliament. Parties have been functioning. I saw them functioning there when I was there some 11 months ago. And in Greece, the government has been functioning, not very successfully, but there are parties there that have been operating. Certainly there is less restriction of any and every kind in Greece than there is in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, or Rumania.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Kaltenborn. Mr. Duranty wants to comment on that. Mr. Duranty.

*Mr. Duranty:* One thing I would say, that as a result of land reform in particular in the Russian-occupied areas, I am perfectly certain

that the majority of the population is more on the side of Russia than the majority of the population in Greece is on the side of the rallies, and the Royalists, and the British. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. The lady with the handsome hat here. (*Laughter.*)

*Lady:* This question is directed to Mr. Lindley who said that we do not know what Russia's foreign policy is. I would like to ask what is our or Britain's well-defined foreign policy?

*Mr. Lindley:* Well, that's very difficult to answer in two or three sentences. (*Laughter.*) I didn't say that we didn't know what Russia's foreign policy was. I said we didn't know what the real aims of Russian policy were; we could not be absolutely sure of them. I think security, and the opportunity for internal development, are probably dominant. At the same time, they do not seem to me to fully explain certain practices on behalf of the Russians which might cloak further designs on the part of some groups within the communist regime which might ultimately come to power.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Lindley. The gentleman here.

*Man:* Mr. Howe. I address this comment to you. It is not a question. Since you were here, at the meeting after the Yalta conference, and that Yalta conference involved the actions of President Roosevelt, I should just like to make the comment that his name has not been mentioned in that line tonight yet, and a lot of credit

to any sort of cooperation that was achieved during the war and even after the war between the Western powers and Russia can very largely be attributed to him. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. Howe, would you comment.

*Mr. Howe:* I don't think anyone on this platform would disagree with that sentiment at all. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. The gentleman in the back with the blue shirt.

*Man:* I have a comment and a question for Mr. Kaltenborn. There are two principles that could apply in this discussion and similar ones regardless of which level they are conducted. One is that he who seeks equity must do equity and he who comes in equity must come with clean hands. (*Applause.*) Now Mr. Molotov made a remark about Mr. Byrnes, I believe, that Mr. Byrnes wished to try out free and democratic elections in the Balkan States before he tried them out in South Carolina. (*Applause and laughter.*) Now there has been a great deal of name calling and some invidious comparisons between communism and democracy. I would like to ask you what is the essential difference between communist autocracy in Moscow and the brand of democracy in Washington, D. C., the Capitol of the United States and points South? (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. Kaltenborn, will you comment on that?

*Mr. Kaltenborn:* There's one very important difference. In



Moscow, or anywhere in Russia, you would not be permitted to rise in a public assembly (*applause*) to make a statement which seeks to introduce into this discussion one of the very grave problems we face in the United States, and which, believe me, sir, cannot be brought nearer to a solution by injecting it into this particular discussion. (*Applause.*) Moreover, let me tell you flatly that Mr. Molotov never said to Mr. Byrnes what you quote him as saying. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* The young lady in the first row. Please keep your question as short as possible.

*Lady:* I would like to address the question to Mr. Lindley. Can there be a means of agreement between the eastern bloc and the western bloc while they remain as blocs, building up walls of security against each other? Or isn't the answer giving up some of our security, some of our sovereignty, and thereby find means of agreement? Because while we remain as nations seeking security and building up walls around each other we are building up enmities and there can't be agreement and there can't be security while there are enmities. We have to give up something in order to find a wholeness.

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. Lindley?

*Mr. Lindley:* With that general statement I agree completely. We're going to have to give up some of our sovereignty gradually. My only point is the discussion tonight is that it's going to be rather difficult to get the Russians to give

up their sovereignty, or a portion of it, when we are unable so far to get agreements which do not involve the yielding of sovereignty.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. We'll take the sailor right here. Yes?

*Sailor:* My question is addressed to Mr. Duranty. I'd like to ask him if he considers the action of our local Communists as a good example of the type of cooperation that we can expect from Russia. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Duranty:* I'm afraid to say I do not. I have tried as little as possible—you hear by my voice I'm English—to interfere in affairs that concern this country, but I do not very strongly approve of the attitude of Communist parties abroad, especially in the western democratic countries, where there is no need for revolution, no demand for revolution, and I would say on the part of the great majority no wish whatsoever for revolution, but I am thinking about Russia where most of the extremes of communism, as I said before, are being abandoned, and which, perhaps, do not entirely dictate the actions of foreign Communists so closely as is generally supposed.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Duranty. The gentleman here.

*Man:* I have a question for Mr. Howe. But can I make a small, short comment first?

*Mr. Denny:* Very short, sir.

*Man:* It seems to me that if a man in Russia sits and looks over the newspapers all day to find something that doesn't agree with him concerning America, and if there is a newspaperman in the

United States who looks over the headlines all day to find something that he doesn't like about Russia, if we multiply that in each country, we'll never get to any basic understanding. Now the question is, doesn't the fact, Mr. Howe, that the Russian-supported faction in the election in Finland lost prove that Mr. Kaltenborn's statement is not very factual about the elections in the eastern countries?

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. Howe and then Mr. Kaltenborn.

*Mr. Howe:* I won't vouch for what Mr. Kaltenborn may have said, but I do maintain and agree with the questioner who makes the point essentially that in Finland—always a democratic country with a long democratic tradition—the Russians made no great interference with the workings of democracy there, provided the people who collaborated with the Germans were thrown out. It is precisely because there are no such conditions in the Balkan countries that you have not had democracy in those countries. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Howe. Mr. Kaltenborn has a comment on that.

*Mr. Kaltenborn:* It is true that the Russians permitted the Finns to vote according to their convictions. However, on the vote there were about ten times as many Communists in Finland as there had ever been before because the Russians naturally helped the Communist Party. However, conditions in Finland are not comparable to the conditions in Bulgaria, Yugo-

slavia, and Rumania, where there is no chance for any party that is not Communist-dominated to express itself.

General Eisenhower pointed out how even in Berlin the Russians control things. They give the Communist newspaper twice as much paper as they give to any of the other parties. They force them to go into a fatherland front in which the key positions are held by Communists. They've got all kinds of techniques under which no other party has any chance. They've always worked it that way. They always will continue to work it that way. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* The gentleman here, please, on the aisle.

*Man:* Mr. Lindley, please. There seems to be a lot of talk among most of the speakers, but especially by you, Mr. Lindley, as to what is the democratic government that has been set up in the Baltic and Balkan countries, especially those supposedly dominated by Russia. The question revolves about what kind of a democratic government did these countries have before 1939? Somebody would think they actually had free elections then. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Lindley:* The pledges that were made were not to restore the *status quo ante*. They were to provide for the governments temporarily that represented all democratic elements and to provide for free elections which would encourage and permit the growth of democracy.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Lindley. Next question.

*Man:* I address my question to Mr. Kaltenborn. I believe in friendship with the fine Russian people. (*Applause.*) I also believe that the Soviet politicians are over-aggressive, dictatorial, and troublesome in all our international conferences. (*Applause.*) I ask this question of you, Mr. Kaltenborn. Do you think that the western democracies, including ourselves, the United States, should continue to compromise our fundamental principles and appease Soviet totalitarianism, now being attempted in arranging world peace and world order?

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. Kaltenborn? Lawyers would call that a leading question.

*Mr. Kaltenborn:* Obviously. When you mention the word appeasement, you bring back very unhappy memories of Munich. There is a point beyond which we should not and cannot appease, and that is why I advocate that we begin by instituting a mutual exchange of press and radio information. Mutual, each to have the same rights in the other's country. I think that if we could begin with that, we could get somewhere. While Russia maintains the black-out, we won't get anywhere.

*Mr. Denny:* Do you think we might have a transatlantic Town Meeting with Russia?

*Mr. Kaltenborn:* Why, George, that's an excellent idea. Now, I suggest you cable Molotov that, as a result of this meeting, we have

decided that Russia could demonstrate her interest in promoting the democratic ideas in which she maintains she believes by cooperating in a Town Meeting of the Air between Moscow and New York. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Do you second that motion, Mr. Duranty?

*Mr. Duranty:* I second it.

*Mr. Denny:* Good. Well, this is the second time I have suggested that to Mr. Stalin. I don't know whether the message will get to him, but the invitation still holds. I'm sure that our sponsors, *The Reader's Digest*, would be delighted to pay the charges. The gentleman way over there on the right. Yes?

*Man:* Mr. Howe. Would the Russians allow Americans in Russia to spread the doctrines of democracy?

*Mr. Denny:* Will you say that again?

*Man:* We have people here in America who spread the doctrines of communism and they are let alone. Would the Russians allow Americans to spread the doctrines of democracy? (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. Howe, have you got that?

*Mr. Howe:* Yes, I've got it. Of course, the Russians don't allow us to spread the doctrines of democracy in Russia and we do allow them to spread their doctrines here. That is perfectly true. All the more reason then because we can feel that we can tolerate that amount of latitude and freedom of discussion. All the more reason then



for us to try to understand why the Russians act the way they do and try to show by a trustful, decent, half-way attitude toward them, over the years, that we can get along together. I wonder who would propose going and fighting the Russians because they don't have our kind of system. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Howe.

*Man:* Mr. Kaltenborn, how can you ask anybody in Europe to respect us, the Americans, who had the biggest Army, I mean in strength, we have the most food, and we thought we did the most in the war, if every time a major question comes up, we retire to the rear.

In Greece, in Italy, and I've been in Western Europe, and there's a mess there—you can see it. How can they respect us if we allow collaborationists to exist in Germany today to advocate a built-up German economy suggested by some Americans. We have to set a policy in—oh, excuse me, I made a comment—

*Mr. Denny:* Go ahead.

*Man:* We have to make a policy to be broken down before we can criticize Russia. She says what she wants. Why don't we say what we want. Maybe she'll respect us then.

*Mr. Denny:* I'm going to ask Mr. Kaltenborn to take care of that in his summary because, while our speakers prepare to summarize this evening's discussion, the Town Meeting and *The Reader's Digest* are honored to present a special

guest to you at this time. He's Rear Admiral Reginald R. Belknap, U.S.N., Retired, chairman of the Layman's National Committee which founded and sponsors National Bible Week. Admiral Belknap. (*Applause.*)

*Admiral Belknap.* This is National Bible Week when we are asked to turn our attention to the Bible for solace, comfort, and peace of mind. In an article in a recent *Reader's Digest*, Reverend Doctor Peter Marshall of Washington, D.C., said, "A nation obedient to the laws of God would lead the world." America's future depends upon her accepting and demonstrating God's government. As individuals, we must learn to let God guide and control our hearts.

The world today is facing many problems. War wounds must be healed, returning veterans must readjust themselves to peaceful occupations, families must again be united, peace of mind must be restored.

The best of all roads toward a just and proper solution to these problems lies within the pages of that Book of Books, the Bible. For ages, it has stimulated, comforted and inspired those who turned to it. Resort to the Bible must become more general.

We hope that National Bible Week will help to make it so and that more and more as people come to read the Bible throughout every week of the year, the tendency toward the injustice, strife, and violence may decline. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Admiral Belknap. Now, for the summaries of tonight's discussion. Mr. Duranty, will you summarize the situation as you see it please. Mr. Duranty.

*Mr. Duranty:* I don't think that there's nearly so much danger of conflict between the United States and Russia as some people seem to imagine. In fact, I don't think there's any danger at all. Throughout history these countries have been friendly. Although their regimes have been always different. They have nothing that they covet from each other and they have many causes for common action not only to maintain peace but also for trade and international relations generally.

After all, the Russians have suffered enormously in this war. Far more than any other country and they have a tremendous job of reconstruction. They also have a tremendous job of developing their own natural resources. They want to do what America has done more than anything else. But the danger, as I said before and emphasize most strongly again, is not our quarrels between the United States and Russia but that our defeated enemies and people who think like them rightly or wrongly and repeat what they say may play on hostilities and rivalries and in many cases false animosities between these two countries in order to make a comeback. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Duranty. Now, Mr. Kaltenborn,

will you give us the summary of the situation as you see it.

*Mr. Kaltenborn:* I heartily agree with Mr. Duranty that the important thing is to stress whenever we can the things on which we and Russia are in agreement. I should like to stress in answer to the young man who just spoke that one of the things we are completely agreed upon is that there must be no retrogression of Germany military power.

What he says about certain disagreements arises from the fact that we have found we have had to take in 4,000,000 additional Germans from the areas of Germany occupied by the Poles and the Russians. We've got to feed them. In order to do that they've got to have a certain minimum amount of industry to create exports to bring in the food. That's the only point and there isn't any difference of opinion.

We and the Russians stand together on many things. We agree with the Russians that we want peace in Europe, we want to organize it together, but we need cooperation. One thing, we are willing, as we have pointed out, to give up the atomic bomb but we want them to give up the blackout on news. Give us a chance to find out the truth.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Kaltenborn, Mr. Duranty, Mr. Howe, and Mr. Lindley. We hope that this discussion will prove of some value to those who meet at the council table at a later date.

Next week your Town Meeting



turns again to the question that hangs over every discussion of international affairs today like the sword of Damocles, "Should We Share the Secret of the Atomic Bomb With Other Nations?"

With the removal of restrictions which prevented scientists from speaking before us before, we are happy to announce that two scientists will be represented on this program. The first speaker will be Dr. Reuben Gustavson, Vice-President of the University of Chicago. He will be joined by Dr. C. C. Suits, Vice-President and Director

of Research of the General Electric Company.

The political debate will be carried on by two U. S. Senators, the Honorable Joseph H. Ball of Minnesota, and the Honorable Alexander Wiley of Wisconsin. The program will originate in the St. Paul Auditorium Arena in St. Paul, Minnesota, where we will be the guests of the Minnesota State Teachers Association and Station WTCN.

*Announcer:* Be sure to tune in when *The Reader's Digest* brings you Town Meeting next week.

## TOWN MEETING PREVIEW

### Are Local Party Organizations an Asset to Democracy?

By CHARLES E. MARTZ

*The subject outlined in this preview is to our best knowledge the one which will be used on America's Town Meeting of the Air, Thursday evening, November 1, 1945. However, in view of the rapidity of developments there is always a possibility that another topic which seems more urgent may be substituted.*

The local party organization is at work almost everywhere in the United States. The universal American custom is to censure the party machine when there is evidence of bad government, but to ignore the organization when there is good government. A consideration of the local political machinery of our Nation is well worth while.

The liability side of the ledger is easy to compile. The local party machine is likely to be made up of men and women for whom politics means a living. This is not universal, but it is too often true. The local organization usually has the machinery with which to nomi-

nate and elect deserving party workers to paying offices. Ability to do the work of the office may be less important than the desire to reward a party worker. This danger exists in the choice of both elective and appointive officers, and even to the drivers of the garbage trucks.

Civil service has made some inroads upon this practice, but there are still plenty of lucrative posts for the deserving.

The fundamental difficulty, then, may be the clash between the function of the local organization and the struggle for good and efficient government. The party organiza-



tion exists to win elections. To win elections it must have workers. To keep its workers active, there must be rewards of one sort or another. To secure funds for campaign expenses, there is an opportunity for other rewards—contracts, legislative, police protection, etc.

No one will maintain that these liabilities are universal. There are good machines as well as bad machines. The question is as to the character of a usage which encourages the bad machine. Every American can cite examples of local organizations which have been distinct civic liabilities.

*The Asset Side of the Ledger*—When we consider the services of the political organization, the list is less well known. It is more intriguing to talk about the boss and the machine than of the leader and the organization. Yet the organization may have many distinct values.

In the first place, it serves as part of the election machinery. The part that it plays varies, but in almost every locality, the method of holding an election would have to be changed were there no party organizations to shoulder part of the burden.

Not the least part of this responsibility is in the presentation of candidates. An election in which the parties do not present candidates has not always resulted in good government.

The party organization is an instrument through which the community is educated about the issues

and candidates in an election. There are, of course, other educational forces—the newspapers, citizens' committees, and the like—but in most places the party organizations take over the lion's share of this task. That education is not ideal, but where there are two or more organizations in the field, the citizen can usually get at the truth if he wants to do so.

The party organization does much to get out the vote. This is a sad commentary on American political mores, but our voting percentage is distressingly low even with the parties doing their best. What would happen without the political workers?

Then there is the matter of party responsibility. Americans are proud of their government of balances, of division of powers. The legislature is largely independent of the executive, and the upper house is independent of the lower house. The result is a wholesome system of checks and balances, but it is also a system in which "passing the buck" may become a fine art. Who is responsible for the defeat of some bill wanted by many people? Each element of the government may try to shift responsibility on the others.

With the political party and its functioning through the local organization, responsibility may be more easily fixed. We have nothing akin to the British Prime Minister, for all responsibility centers in him. The nearest we can come to it is the political organization. One of its functions is to centralize

the making of policy. If we do not approve of the policy of a government, we can fix responsibility upon the party that is in control. Without a party organization, such responsibility does not exist.

The local organization is the body which comes into direct contact with the voters. But it is the fundamental unit from which the larger units are compounded—county, state, and national. The national organization can operate only through the local organizations.

This discussion, then, involves a balancing of these services of the organization against the obvious abuses to which the powers of the organization can be put. Perhaps the voters' ability to put bad organizations where they belong, if the voters do not approve, has something to do with this question. It might not be too far from the truth to say that local communities have the kind of local political organizations that they want—or at least, that they are content to have.